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(72)Inventor: SHIMODA KANEYASU

YAMASHITA ATSUSHI

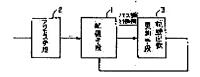
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(57) Abstract:

PURPOSE: To reduce the storage capacity by converting a test number of times of each path branched from a node for sequential decoding in a sequential decoder into a relative value below a predetermined value and storing the result.

CONSTITUTION: The number of times of path test for the sequential decoding is stored in a storage means 1. The number of times of the path branched from the node connected with a path selected at the path test of the sequential decoding is read from the storage means 1 by an access means 2. A test number of time revision means 3 in response to the test number of time each path read in this way and the selected path identification information converts the test number of time of each

path into a relative value being a predetermined value or below and the relative value is stored in a corresponding storage area from which the test number of times is read prior to the generation of the relative value to update the content.



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